

## UTAH QUOTES

"Eric said, 'I didn't tell you I was depressed. Nobody really knew who I was. I felt different. I felt screwed up. But I didn't tell anybody.'"

— Mike Moerer, an anti-teen-suicide activist, on the death of his son

"As I turned she was calling, 'Daddy! Daddy! Where are my legs?' Right then I knew we were in deep trouble. It still haunts me sometimes."

— Melvin Ashton, on the day his daughter broke her neck on a trampoline

"With people like Gayle Ruzicka involved, it almost makes me want to be a Democrat. . . . Somehow the party has got to get a leash on her."

— Republican Utah House candidate Bryan Irving on Eagle Forum leader Ruzicka's unsolicited injection of anti-gay material into his campaign, in which he ended up losing to Utah's first openly gay legislator

"The city ranks first in the proportion of household personal computers, nearly 100 percent, partly for the general cord keeping important to M  
— Newsweek magazine on City as a high-

# Study Finds Pollution Champ MagCorp Also Emits Dangerous Dioxin Chemical

Company has long denied the problem. Toxic levels far exceed federal 'action level' standards for cleanup

BY BRENT ISRAELSEN  
THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

The long-awaited study of Utah's biggest polluter shows what environmentalists have long suspected and what Magnesium Corp. of America (MagCorp) has long denied:

The company emits dioxins, a family of chemicals believed to cause cancer and disrupt hormones in humans.

Just released by the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the study shows elevated levels of dioxin in water and sediment near the company's plant, located on the southwestern shore of the Great Salt Lake.

According to the study, a quarter-mile-long industrial waste water ditch north of the plant contained dioxin levels as high as 38.9 parts per billion (ppb).

That figure is considerably higher than the Centers for Disease Control "action level" of 1 ppb for dioxin. An "action level" triggers a cleanup and prevention effort.

DEQ toxicologist Steve Packham said the findings will prompt the state to conduct further testing to determine the extent of the contamination and to find out where and how much is being discharged from the MagCorp plant. Once the exact dioxin source is identified, MagCorp likely will be required to reduce or eliminate the emissions into the environment.

The state also has called on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to conduct blood tests of MagCorp workers to determine whether anyone has ingested the poison. And Packham said the state may test farm

"I guess we're not so ignorant, huh?"

Chip Ward

Grantsville environmentalist

animals in the vicinity and the lake's brine shrimp for the presence of dioxin.

"We need to take steps to assure whatever level is there does not proceed further," Packham said. "We also want to know whether there could be contaminated materials that have been moved offsite that might be tainted with dioxins. We have to evaluate all possible vectors by which these contaminants could leave the site."

MagCorp, whose president has an unlisted phone number, could not be reached for comment Saturday and did not issue a general press release about the study.

For years, MagCorp officials have denied the plant emits dioxins and called environmental groups "mean-spirited" and "ignorant" for badgering the state to require dioxin testing.

On Saturday, environmentalists were feeling vindication.

"I guess we're not so ignorant, huh?" said Grantsville resident Chip Ward, a member of the Sierra Club-backed Citizens Against Chlorine Contamination.

Neither Ward nor Packham was surprised by the dioxin findings.

MagCorp, which produces magnesium from the saline waters of the lake, is the single largest source of chlorine emissions in the United States. Last year, the company spewed 82.3 million pounds of chlorine into the air from the plant's huge smokestacks.

The magnesium production process includes all the components necessary for dioxin production: high temperatures, hydrocarbons and chlorine.

While high levels were found in the waste water ditch, no dioxins were found in a deep water well. Testing found only background levels of dioxin in the Great Salt Lake where MagCorp draws its water and found 0.5 ppb in a waste water holding pond northeast of the plant.

In addition to testing soils and water, state officials soon will test MagCorp's stacks to determine if dioxin is being released into the air, where it could travel to food-production areas. That testing is on hold pending a highly technical review of the methodology by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Like DDT, the pesticide banned in the 1970s, dioxins persist and accumulate in the environment and can travel up the food chain. If brine shrimp carry dioxin, for example, that could be passed to humans through prawns, which feed on brine shrimp harvested from the lake.

Though it has been found conclusively to be toxic and carcinogenic to laboratory animals, its effect on humans has been more subtle and controversial. At least three studies, however, confirm dioxin has negatively affected human endocrine systems.

## Snowboarder Loosens Avalanche, Dies in Snow Pile Near Alta

BY MICHAEL VIGH  
THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

A snowboarder, who triggered the first avalanche of the season

they were unharmed in the avalanche estimated as 3-feet deep, 20-feet across and 500 feet in length.

The five people hiked to Mount

later discovered in a pile of snow by a member of the Alta Ski patrol and his dog.

However, Salt Lake County Sheriff's search and rescuers called off the recovery of the vic-

"We want to try to make the recovery before the next storm hits," Larkin said.

National Weather Service senior forecaster Peter Wilensky said the avalanche danger could

### Voters W

A few observers of the elections are even though counted, the campaign. The Salt Lake like a never-ending campaign.

This year voters their own through the slick ad campaign. Mama Elk nursing mountain goat the camera, the majestic eagle

Those pretty sets of money, groups, hooked feinting one of rights: The abzen initiative lity.

Granted, Proposition 5 changed the Utah Constitution only as wildlife issues are concerned. Now wildlife initiatives will require a two-thirds majority vote, instead a simple majority.

Those who can rest easy crazy animals come into our us into passing will stop us finding mama eagles.

What voters that they also flap for those barge in next you citizens a little uppity those citizen the way of how to live

You think Think about Tuesday. Fiscal-marijuana